

## Nine in the Afternoon

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Category: Homestuck

Genre: Friendship, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Dave S., John E.

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2016-04-11 08:12:09

Updated: 2016-04-21 20:46:13

Packaged: 2016-04-27 19:59:23

Rating: M

Chapters: 5

Words: 17,434

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: Literally a bunch of John/Dave drabbles with no rhyme or rhythm. Probably a little zesty with some lemons, but also much fluff. In the mood for second-hand embarrassment or cute John/Dave cuddles? You've come to the right place, friend. All warnings for chapters with lemons will be posted at the beginning of said chapter. You've been warned!

### 1. No Homo? Sure, okay

**\*\*A/N: \*\***Tis the beginning of a probably unending story of John/Dave one-shots. Some will be... indecent. Some will be fluffy. This is just one of my many ships in Homestuck. Let's not forget we're all trash here. Much love. -kyle

\* \* \*

><p>The sun isn't even out yet. It has to be like, midnight, mainly because you feel like you haven't slept a bit. You groan and glance over at your alarm clock and groan again, louder this time, and fling your sheets onto the floor. There is a very annoying and very incessant tapping on your window, and you're just going to have to figure out what the hell is interrupting your beauty sleep at such an uncool hour. You throw your window open with a gruntâ€"it likes to stickâ€"and glare down at the idiot who is about to face your wrath.<p>

Oh. It's just John.

"What do you want, Egderp?"

"Rose won't text me back." He called up. Even though he had to raise his voice to be heard, he sounded like he was still trying to be quiet. Good thing, too. If Bro caught you talking to some dudeâ€"he knew John, but that was irrelevantâ€"this late at night through your window, he would never let you live it down. He would call you Juliet

for the rest of your life. You couldn't handle that; it wasn't cool at all.

"Did you think to check the time, dumb fuck?" You lean over the window sill and hang there, dangling over the edge. Though it's kind of hard to see him, you can tell that John is shifting from one foot to the other. You can practically smell his anxiety. He's so easy to read. "What do you want? Seriously, it's not like I need any beauty sleep, but damn it, dude."

"Can I come in?"

If you weren't hanging out of the window, you probably wouldn't have been able to hear him. You sigh really loudly and push yourself out of the window, close it, and head downstairs. You have to skip two steps near the bottom because if you stepped on them they would creak loudly. And if you stepped on them, it was like little alarm bells went off inside Bro's head; he would come flying down the stairs with a different weapon every time. You wondered where he got stuff like that, but you figured he did it for ironic purposes.

Man, your brother was weird a fuck.

John was already standing at the front door when you opened it. "Everything cool?"

"If by 'cool' you mean totally not cool, then sure."

You close the door behind him with a grimace and gesture for him to walk to the kitchen. You were thirsty and had a feeling whatever he was going to say was going to take forever, so the kitchen was the place to be. He climbed onto the counter and watched you pour yourself a glass of milk with a small smile on his derp face.

"What?" You take a big gulp of the milk, watching him with squinted eyes. "It builds strong bones. How do you think I win arm wrestling matches with you all the time?"

"I figured it was because I wasn't cool enough to handle your strength." He laughed, shaking his head. "But we'll go with your reasoning. It makes more sense."

"Of course it does, I'm Dave Strider." You scoff, rolling your eyes as if it should be the most obvious thing in the world.

It was.

"So what did you want to talk about?"

John lost his smile immediately and began wringing his fingers like they were full of water or something. Okay, bad analogy. Anyway, he looked really worried. You set your cup of milk down on the counter and jumped up beside him, turning so you could look at him properly. He didn't turn, which was weird, because John was a 'follow the leader' sort of guy. He usually moved the way you moved unless you told him not to. Something must be seriously wrong.

"Spill it, Egderp."

"It's actually not really that big of a deal." He said quietly, refusing to look at you. "It was justâ€"I was thinking about it earlier and I couldn't not talk to you about it. It's not bad, I guess, but it makes me feel stupid because you probablyâ€"never mind."

"I probably what?"

He looked at you, and he looked really embarrassed. To be honest, you were embarrassed for him. Whatever he wanted to tell you was obviously important, at least to him, but he couldn't spill it out because he probably couldn't find a good way to say it.

"Try acting it out."

His cheeks flushed bright red. "What?"

You raised your eyebrows, curious about his reaction. "I said, try acting it out. If you can't tell me, show me."

"Oh, Dave, I don't know about that you know I'm not very good at Charadesâ€" "

"I wasn't asking you to play Charades, idiot, I was asking you to show me what you're talking about. I can't read your fucking mind, John. I might be cool, but I'm not that cool." It pained you to say that. You sighed and pressed your forehead against his shoulder, closing your eyes. John was the only person you could do this with without him questioning your motives. It was nice. Of course he was the only one you liked enough to be this chill with, too. "It's too late for this shit."

"I guess without the shades you can't keep your cool, huh?" John teased, poking you lightly on the cheek. "Want me to go get them?"

You sit up suddenly, feeling even more suspicious. "You won't tell me what's going on with you but you'll volunteer to brave the stairs, go to my room, plunder about in that disaster area and find my shades, all the while trying not to wake up Broâ€"who I should probably addâ€"is a light sleeper and probably already awake and waiting for the perfect moment to strike."

"It sounded a lot easier before you threw in the obstacles." John muttered. "I don't think I've ever been in your room."

"I'm afraid my socks are carnivorous. They might eat you."

John nodded slowly, still frowning. "I don't know how to tell you."

You want to slam your face against a wall right now. "I told you, Egderp, showâ€" "

Before you could finish your sentence, John spun around on the counter and pressed his lips to yours. You threw your hands up in shock, staring up at him. His eyes were shut really tight and holy shit. You didn't know Egderp could kiss. Holy shit. Holy shit, holy shit, holy fucking shit. You wanted to lean into it, push him up against something, anything, but at the same time you wanted to lean

back and give him the crazy eye likeâ€œ"

\_"Bro. No homo."\_

But you didn't do that, but you also didn't move, but even with all the things you weren't doing, you \_were\_ \_kissing him back. John had to have gotten practice from somewhere, because hot damn, your tongue was having trouble keeping up. But you couldn't think of that right now. One of his hands touched your waist and something inside of you snapped. You grunted and slid off of the counter, pulling him along with you.

"Dave?"

"Shut up, Egderp."

You turned around suddenly, making John run into you. You pushed him against the nearest wall and began kissing him again, and he happily obliged, his hands returning to their previous position before you had so rudely interrupted. Unable to repress a smirk, you grabbed his hands and laced your fingers with his, pressing his arms against the wall. You broke away from the kiss and pressed your lips against his jawâ€œtrying to ignore the fact that you had to stand on your tiptoes to do thisâ€œgrazing his neck with your teeth and reveling in the feeling of him shuddering beneath you.

"Dave, don'tâ€œ"

"Jesus, Egbert," you muttered, biting his neck a little harder with every word. Breath hissed out between his teeth and his hands gripped yours so tightly you figured you didn't have very long before you couldn't feel them anymore. "I didn't know you were so sensitive."

He lifted his leg a littleâ€œhe didn't have to lift it very highâ€œand pressed it against your crotch. You masked what could have been a moan with a laugh and look up at him, smirking. "What a dirty trick."

"This is a two player game." He said breathlessly. "I'll win this one."

"Damn straight you \_aren't.\_" You mutter, releasing one of his hands to pull at the hair on the back of his head. He winced, but didn't complain. "You'll be hard-pressed to try, Egderp."

With his free hand, John pulled you closer and slid his hand underneath your shirt and teased the elastic of your boxers. Frozen, and not really sure what he was doing, you stood still until his lips found yours again. These kisses weren't like the othersâ€œhot and fast like the hormonal and inexperienced teenagers that you two wereâ€œbut slow and sweet, like trying to melt chocolate or something.

Okay, bad analogy (\_again\_), but it made sense to you. John released your other hand and reached up to rest it against your cheek. Your eyes widened a little, and without thinking, you leaned into his hand and fought to keep your eyes open. Still very much aware of the hand that was half in and half out of your boxers, you grabbed two fistfuls of his shirt and decided stupidly that yeahâ€œ"

This idiot was probably going to win.

Without needing to look, you tugged him in the direction of your living room, each step motivated by muscle memory. Feeling the edge of the sectional press against the backs of your knees, you tug sharply at his shirt and fall back against the couch. John yelps in surprise and you can't help but laugh, even though he was actually heavier than you'd anticipated and it'd kind of hurt.

"Dude, you sounded like a little girl!" You gasped, glad for the excuse to laugh because otherwise this would have made John feel bad. He hated hurting people. He was weird like that. "And the expression on your face was priceless!"

You smirked up at him and he smiled back you, but it wasn't the kind of smile you'd expected from him. You expected it to be an embarrassed smile, or something like it, but it was different. You didn't know how to explain it, and it made a little uncomfortable lump settle in your throat. Holding both sides of your face, he leaned down and kissed you again, just as tenderly as he had before, but impossibly softer. It was so chaste you could almost believe it hadn't even happened. His lips were like a barely there breath on yours, and it was that little show of affection that took your breath away.

Your chest hurtâ€"of course it could still be your lungsâ€"but you were pretty sure it was hurting somewhere on the upper left side where your heart was \_supposed \_to be. Of course you never had paid any attention in science class. It wasn't your favorite subject, so you could easily be wrong. You were also pretty sure they had never taught you about the reasons why your heart could totally just start hurting while you were making out with someone. This is so uncool.

"Did I show you well enough, Dave?" John whispered, his lips still ghosting across yours.

You swallowed hard, staring up at him wide-eyed. "Johnâ€| youâ€| did a very good job."

"At a loss for words, Strider?" John chuckled. "Are my kissing skills that good?"

"S-shut up!" You stammered, your face burning. "I'm too cool to be speechless."

He laughed, his hands moving from your face to rest on your sides. He pushed up your shirt, pressed his hands against your stomach, and ghosted his fingers lightly over your skin. You close your eyes and sigh, reveling in the feeling of his soft hands exploring your body. He whispers something unintelligible in your ear, and for a second you're really confused, but then you feel him palming your dick through the fabric of your boxers and suddenly you understand.

"Johnâ€" "

You interrupt yourself with a quiet moan, your hips rising into his hand in the hopes of gaining a little more friction, but his hand

disappeared as soon as you moved. You cursed yourself for the whine that escaped from your mouth and opened your eyes to glare up at the idiot who was teasing the shit out of you. When your eyes met, he looked extremely shocked, and rightfully, too. That little whine thing you had going on was just pathetic, even for you.

Wait.

"Daveâ€¦ that wasâ€¦"

"Don't you \_dare\_."

John's lips quirked upwards into a smirk. "Actually kind of hot."

For a brief second, you're stunned into silence. "Are you fucking kidding me? That was the most pathetic sound I think I've ever made in my entire life. I don't think I sounded that pathetic even when I was a baby. Jesus Christ, Johnâ€¦ are you into that shit?"

You were just fucking with him now, but he looked pretty willing to play along. He grinned and his hand returned to your crotch with a renewed vigor. You inhaled sharply between clenched teeth and grabbed a fistful of his hair so you could kiss him again. Really it was for insurance purposes; it might help prevent those pathetic whining noises again, but it was kind of like a buy one get one free kind of deal. John was a great kisser. Like a really great fucking kisserâ€"of course you didn't really have anyone to compare him toâ€"to the point where it was difficult to even describe it, and so you figure you're just going to let the poor readers try and imagine just how awesome it really is.

You're very cruel.

"\_Fuck.\_"

"What the hell are you two doing on my couch?"

"\_Fuck!" \_

You sit up, pushing John away and straightening your clothes. Bro stands about five or ten feet away from the couch, watching you and John try and stammer out an excuse with a stern expression on his face.

"We were justâ€"there wasn'tâ€"and I wasâ€" "

"You know that's what bedrooms are for, right?" The stern expression dissolves immediately and he turns on his heel. "But don't think I won't have a few choice words for you in the morning."

You fall back against the couch in relief, your whole body feeling extremely heavy. John leans over you again, and with a red face and embarrassed smile saysâ€"

"Wanna finish this upstairs?"

**\*\*A/N: \*\*Trans!Dave.** Yay! I actually really love trans!Dave because it allows me to explore a whole other side of him that, honestly, could be there canonically. Judge me, you shall not. Read, you will. Haha. Anyway, hope you enjoy this little drabble as much as my partner did.

\* \* \*

><p>Dave turned to the side, looking over his shoulder at the mirror, glaring at his reflection. He'd come to terms with his own appearance over the years, knowing that it would be difficult to change. It was actually pretty impossible. He didn't really even have the slightest clue about the whole process he needed to take. It was all still so new to him, even though the discomfort and anxiety had felt like a lifetime thing. Though he had become a professional at covering up said discomfort and anxiety. Dave turned to his other side and placed his hands on his hips, poking out his chest. With an irritated grunt he reached up to adjust his binder and glared at his reflection again. It was the only one who knew his secret.<p>

Dave sighed and let his hands fall to his sides as he turned to search for the shirt he'd thrown off upon entering his room. His brother would be home any minute now if he wasn't already, and Dirk had a bad habit of barging inâ€”completely unwanted, by the wayâ€”at really horrible times. He'd almost caught Dave changing out of his binder. That had been terrifying. Dave had shrieked at Dirk for over a half hour about knocking and respecting a locked door. The lecture had been decidedly ineffective. Dave smoothed his shirt down over his chest, glanced in his mirror one last time, and then walked out of his room towards the kitchen.

"Hey, Danielle."

Dave mentally cringed at the sound of his name. "'Sup, bro?"

"When's your friend coming over today? I have a couple errands I still gotta do, and I promised Jake I'd go out for a few drinks with him."

"Oh shit, I completely forgot I invited John over!" Dave smacked his forehead. "Damn, I don't even remember." He ran his fingers through his hair and sighed, trying to remember. "I think we agreed around three. It shouldn't be much longer. Egderp is annoyingly punctual. It's so uncool."

Dirk snorted. "Well I'll stay long enough to meet him. I'm not just leaving my little sister alone with just anyone." He stood up from his sprawling position on the sofa and moved towards the kitchen. He stepped around his little brother and grabbed the milk carton from the fridge. "How was school?"

"The usual." Dave shrugged, jumping up onto the counter. "Skipped a few classes, vandalized the bathroom stalls. Beat up a few Freshmen. Nothing new."

"Danielle."

"Alright, I did none of that." Dave rolled his eyes. "But hey, I kind of got something serious to ask you. Can you... not call me Danielle

while John is here? Or refer to me as your sister?"

"Yeah, I guess. But whyâ€"

Dirk was interrupted by three quiet knocks. Dave leaped off the counter and ran in the direction of the front door. He undid all of the locks and swung it open, schooling his grin into a smirk as he looked up at John. "What's up, Egderp?"

John grinned. "Sorry I'm late. There were a ton of people on the elevator, and none of them were going to your floor. I was the last one off."

Dave snorted, waving his hand for John to come inside, closing the door behind him. "Dude, you're totally early. There's still fifteen minutes before you're technically supposed to be here. You're punctuality is entirely \_un\_ironic."

"I don't think that's a word."

"Oh, it is. Look it up. It's in \_Strider's Dictionary of Cool and Ironic Things to Say\_. It's basically a how-to guide for derps like you."

John rolled his eyes, following behind his friend into the kitchen. An older, taller version of Dave was leaning against the counter, scrolling through his phone in one hand, holding a carton of milk in the other. At the sound of voices, he looked up at the two teenagers standing in front of him.

"Dirk, this is my friend, John. John, this is my older brother, Dirk."

"Hi, it's nice to meet you. Dave talks about you a lot in school. You're totally not what I expected."

Dirk pocketed his phone and shook John's outstretched hand once before leaning back against the counter. Despite the shades, Dave knew that his brother was giving him \_the look\_. \_He knew he would have so much explaining to do later, but for now he was going to milk this forced silence for as much as it was worth.

"Can I trust the two of you alone for a few hours?" Dirk asked as he put away the milk.

Dave glared at his brother. "Of course. We're not gonna do anything."

"No, I know. But a big brother can't help but worry. It's not like I can always know what's going on."

John glanced between Dave and his brother nervously. "Am I missing something?"

"No. It's cool." Dirk nodded in John's direction. "I'll see you guys around dinner time. Pizza sound good?"

"Bring home apple juice." Dave called over his shoulder as he opened the fridge. "We're out."



"Got it. It was nice meeting you, John. I'll see you two later." He shot Dave a pointed look before disappearing out the front door. John visibly relaxed, leaning against the counter for support.

"He's terrifying."

"You get used to it." Dave shrugged, closing the fridge. There wasn't actually anything he wanted. He'd only been using it as an excuse to avoid looking at his older brother. John didn't know anything. In fact, no one at school did. Ever since moving from Texas to NYC, Dave had made sure to tell all of his teachers to refer to him as Dave. All of them had accepted it without question. In Texas, not so much. It had been a nightmare in that state.

But Dirk had no idea what was going on. Dave made sure to keep a low profile here so no one would question him. He'd made a few friends, but they were all outcasts like him. John was one of them, but he was pretty dense. Dave was sure John had no idea. Jade wasn't nearly as blind as John could be, but if she knew, she seemed content with ignoring it. Rose though... lately he'd noticed her giving him odd looks. It made him uncomfortable, like she could see straight under his clothes, but he did his best to ignore it. But either way, at school he was Dave. At home, he was Danielle, and not by choice. He knew his brother would probably accept him, but there was that lingering fear that maybe he wouldn't. And the uncertainty kept his mouth shut.

"Dave?"

"Huh?" Dave blinked and looked at John, who looked concerned.

"What?"

"I've been trying to get your attention for like ten seconds. Are you okay?"

"Yeah I'm fine." Dave waved away his concern. "We can chill in my room. It's totally sick. I got these new turntables for my birthday last year. I'll let you try 'em out if you promise not to be a dweeb and break them."

"Sweet! No, totally, I'll be careful!"

"Good. Otherwise, it's coming out of your next paycheck."

John rolled his eyes and charged into Dave's room, completely himself now that Dave's terrifying older brother was gone, and would be for the next couple of hours. Dave wandered over to his bed and sat down, pushing himself back and crossing his legs. He took off his shades and set them on his bedside table, watching John freak out over his turntables with a small smile on his face. He liked how immature John could be. He always got so excited over little things, and always went out of his way to make a fool of himself if he noticed Dave was in a bad mood. He honestly loved the idiot.

Wait.

"Dave, this is so cool." John gushed, tentatively playing with all the knobs and buttons. "I'm gonna stop messing with it though, because I seriously can't afford to fix what I break."

John looked over at Dave, losing his smile when he saw his friend's expression. Dave was staring at him, though it didn't seem like he was actually looking at him—it was like he was staring past him at something John couldn't see. His eyes were wide and his posture was stiff. John walked over to Dave and lightly pushed on his shoulder.

"Seriously, are you okay? You keep doing that weird staring thing and it's freaking me out. Dave?"

"Y-yeah... I—" Dave blinked, shaking his head slowly. "Sorry. I was just thinking about something. It caught me off guard. This is really uncool." Dave cleared his throat uncomfortably. "How about we watch a movie? I've got a ton of actually good movies over there under my TV. Feel free to pick any of them. None of them are lame."

John snorted, easily derailed. "I doubt it. My movies are the best."

"Only in your dreams, Egderp." Dave stretched out across his bed, quickly readjusting his binder while John had his back turned. He'd been wearing it for too long. He would have to take it off eventually. Hopefully he wouldn't have to take it off until John had already left for the night.

"How about this one?" John held up a movie.

"\_Crank\_? Hell yeah. Jason Statham is a beast in those movies."

John put in the movie and then sat down on Dave's bed, sitting at an awkward position so he wouldn't be all up in Dave's space or blocking his view of the TV. Dave sighed loudly and grabbed John's collar, yanking him down.

"Get comfortable, Egderp. It's a long movie."

"O-okay." John stuttered, his cheeks flaming. He shifted around for a few minutes, trying to find a comfortable position. Dave twisted and angled himself to the side so John could rest his head on his stomach. He stopped moving for a few minutes, but then he started fidgeting again.

"The fuck. Are you gonna move around for the whole movie?"

"I'm sorry!" John apologized quickly. "I just... I don't want to like, get all up in your personal space or whatever. You get kind of scary when people get too close to you."

Dave's irritation instantly deflated. "Oh. Really?"

"Uh, yeah. A few months ago you actually made Jade cry. She waited until you were gone, but as soon as you left for class she just sort of burst into tears. She was saying something about how she just really wanted to hug you because she noticed you were having a bad day, and you sort of bit her head off for it."

"Oh." Another lame response. \_Way to go, Strider.\_ "Jeez... I—" I didn't realize I was such a dick about it."

"It's okay." John hesitated. "I mean I guess. It's probably not, but

that's just how you are. We try not to get in your personal space. Jade doesn't hate you for it. She was just really sorry."

"I guess I need to apologize for that."

"No you don't." John rolled over, crossing his arms over Dave's stomach. "Like I said, it's just you. We should respect that a little better."

Dave sighed. "It's not..." He grimaced. "I don't know. I feel bad now."

John sat up, crossing his legs. "Really, Dave. Don't worry about it too much. We're your friends. If we can't get over something as stupid as this, then I don't really think we should be friends." He grimaced. "Okay, no, I think that sounded bad. What I'm trying to say isâ€"

"Shut up, Egderp." Dave sat up, looking down at his hands. "I get what you're trying to say. But no matter how much you guys might accept, I still want to apologize. I'm not allowed to be a dick because I can'tâ€" he cut himself off, closing his eyes for a brief second "â€"you shouldn't have to walk on eggshells around me how about that?"

John frowned. "Dave."

"What?"

"Dave."

"What!"

John laughed. "We don't walk on eggshells."

"You don't understand."

"Then make me understand." John said quietly, scooting closer. He reached forward and grabbed Dave's hand, still smiling. "However you need to say it. I want to understand."

Dave stared down at their hands in shock. The way his heart reacted, hammering painfully against his chest, only reminded him more about the discomfort he was currently feeling. He blinked and took a deep breath, trying to calm himself down, but it didn't really work. It felt like it was suddenly a million degrees in his room. Was this what a panic attack felt like?

"Can you open that window and turn my fan on?" Dave asked quietly, releasing John's hand. He massaged his fingers, surprised by how stiff they felt. He hadn't realized he'd been gripping John's hand so tightly. He watched John throw open his window and adjust his fan, wishing he could change out of this damned binder. But he knew the difference would be obvious, even to an idiot like John.

"Thanks." Dave muttered when John returned to his seat.

"No problem."

Dave sighed. "I don't how to make you understand, John. Iâ€"this is

totally out of your depth. Sometimes I don't even understand it completely." He grimaced, rubbing his face. "Holy shit."

John scooted closer until their knees were touching. "Could I... I meanâ€”would you let me try to make you understand something?"

"What?" Dave frowned. "Uh, sure, I guess. Go ahead."

"Close your eyes."

"No way. That's a deal breaker."

"Come on, just trust me."

Dave grimaced, staring at John for what seemed like forever. "Fine."

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, trying to force himself to relax. After a few seconds of silence, Dave felt the bed shift under John's weight. It didn't really click with him what John was doing until he felt his hands on his neck. But before he could react, John had already closed the distance between them and pressed their lips together. Dave made a completely unattractive noise in the back of his throat with the initial shock of being kissed. Now he was frozen, unsure of whether or not he should respond or push John away as politely as possible. But before he could make a decision, John leaned back, smiling a little.

"What'd you learn?"

"That you're a shit kisser."

John shook his head. "I'm being serious."

"I... don't know."

"Can I do it again?"

Dave hesitated, chewing on his bottom lip. "Yes."

John shifted closer until he was straddling Dave's lap, moving his hands up from his neck to comb through his hair. Dave hesitantly rested his hands on John's waist, tilting his head up slightly so he could look right at him. John held his gaze for what seemed like an eternity before leaning forward to kiss him, keeping his eyes open. Dave's feather-light hold on John's waist tightened slightly and his eyes fluttered shut. The panic he felt from before was still there, it just wasn't as loud as it had been.

As awkward as it felt, John kept his eyes open, almost expecting Dave to back off suddenly. John had had a sort-of-there-but-not-really kind of crush on Dave for the longest time. He'd never actually been able to understand it until now. Dave was a lot shorter than him, true, and he was really pale compared to John, and his eyes were kind of scary sometimes (they're red), but none of that actually mattered. He liked Dave because he was really nice and funny, and even if he acted immature sometimes, he liked that too. Dave could make John smile even if he didn't want to. He had horrible taste in movies, but John thought the music he made was awesome. He loved his irony. He

loved that Dave thought he was actually cool by any means. He lovedâ€”

Wait.

John felt his stomach do a happy back flip when he heard an almost inaudible hum from Dave. He moved his hands down from Dave's hair to his shoulders, pushing him back against the bed. John leaned back from the kiss to press his lips against Dave's throat, nipping over places he hoped were sensitive. Dave's fingers dug into John's hips as he pulled down, aiming to create friction between their bodies. He let out a quiet but high-pitched whine at the feel of John's fingers caressing his stomach, slowlyâ€”agonizinglyâ€”pushing up his shirtâ€”

Wait.

"John." He gasped, trying to sit up. "No, John. Wait."

John sat back immediately. "I'm sorry. I didn'tâ€”"

"No, no, no... Iâ€”it's just me. I can'tâ€”I mean weâ€”shouldn'tâ€”Iâ€”"

John threw his arms around Dave in a crushing hug, burying his face into his shoulder. "Shh, it's okay. You really don't have to explain yourself. I shouldn't have pushed you that far. I was rushing. I just really like you and I got excited at the thought of you liking me back. I'm sorry, Dave."

"I wanted to keep going." Dave whispered, shivering a little as he held tight to John. "I just have thisâ€”this issue, okay? And I can't tell you what's wrong right now. No one knows. It's not your fault, John, it's mine. It really is my fault."

"Well, I don't care who's fault it is." John leaned back from the hug, smiling. "Can I ask you a question?"

Dave grimaced. "I guess..."

"Will you go out with me?"

"Like... publicly?"

John rolled his eyes. "Duh."

Dave felt his face heat up. "I mean yeah, sure. That'd be cool. Totally."

He laughed. "So that's a yes."

"What do you think it was, Egderp? Of course it was a yes."

"Cool." John grinned and kissed Dave's cheek. "I'm glad."

### 3. Something About Jason Statham

\*\*A/N: PART TWO! I loved that last little one-shot so much that I decided to make a three-part one-shot series. This is part two. I

hated that it seemed so unresolved, and trans!Dave deserves resolution. And a loving John who will accept him for who he is. So without further ado, I give you part two. Haha.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>"Hey, kid. Wake up."<p>

Dave groaned and tried to roll over, but was met with resistance. He blinked his eyes open in confusion, pushing against the warm, fleshy wall curled up beside him. Dave pushed himself up into a sitting position, squinting through the darkness. Dirk stood at the foot of the bed with his hands in his pockets. When Dave looked at him, he gestured for his little brother to follow him.

Dave grimaced and gently untangled himself from John, stumbling out of his bed towards the living room. He leaned against the wall, rubbing the sleep from his eyes. Dirk was in the kitchen, taking a couple slices of pizza from a box and setting them on a plate.

"You guys were asleep when I got home." Dirk said, putting the pizza in the microwave. "Hungry?"

"Uh, yeah." Dave mumbled, shuffling forward. "Did'ya get apple juice? I'm fuckin' thirsty."

"Yup. I put it in the fridge."

Dave sighed and trudged over to the fridge, yanking it open. He grabbed the carton of apple juice, opened it, and threw it back. When it didn't feel like the sides of his throat were stuck together anymore, Dave put the carton back into the fridge and took the plate of pizza Dirk offered to him. He jumped up onto the counter, but before he could take his first bite, Dirk cleared his throat.

"So, Dave, huh?"

"Crap." Dave's shoulders slumped. "I was actually sort of hoping you'd forget."

"Unlikely." Dirk shook his head, crossing his arms loosely over his chest. "Do you wanna talk to me about it?"

Dave shrugged, picking the cheese off of his pizza. Suddenly he wasn't very hungry anymore. "Not really."

"Well then I'll talk to you about it." There was a pause, like he was trying to find the right way to start. "I'm not an idiot. I noticed when you started... changing, I guess. But I didn't want to say anything in case you just weren't ready for me to know. I figured you would come to me about it. I remember one time I woke up really late, probably around three in the morning, to go to the bathroom. But you were in there. At first though I didn't realize it was you, because your voice was deeper. I almost ran back to my room for a katana before it hit me. You were training your voice. For what, I had no clue, but that's what you were doing. Now I know for sure, because you lowered your voice around John." Dirk paused again, crossing his ankles. "I talked to Jake tonight about what that meant for you, because even though I see it, I still didn't think I understood it, and I didn't want to jump into this conversation blind. He told me

you were probably trans" Dave stiffened but said nothing "and that completely went over my head. Jake told me, 'Danielle just doesn't feel like herself in the body she has. If she's transgender, then that means a lot of change for both of you. And you need to be there for her. For him. Because she's not your little sister.'"

Dave tried to swallow around the lump that had formed in his throat. "I wanted tell you. I was terrified of how you might react to it. I had no idea what would happen. I mean there were so many stories online of kids getting rejected and hurt and made fun of and all of these horrible things and I didn't know what to do"

"Jesus, okay." Dirk snatched the plate out of Dave's hands and pulled him off the counter into a hug. Dave choked on a sob and pressed his face against Dirk's chest, squeezing his eyes shut tight against the tears that threatened to spill over.

"I'm sorry, I wanted to tell you! I really did. I just didn't know how to bring it up. Every time I wanted to say something, I'd hear my birth name or there was someone here or it just didn't feel right or something I don't fucking know"

"Alright, alright." Dirk held Dave back at arm's length. "Look, little dude, it's okay. Just stop apologizing, because it's not your fault. You didn't choose this." He waved his hands around, gesturing to Dave. "And even though I don't really understand why that is, I would never make you feel like shit for wanting to feel comfortable in your own body. That would be really shitty of me, because I've always told you to do whatever makes you happy. If this makes you happy, who am I to tell you that you can't be my little brother? Who's to say you were ever even my little sister?" Dirk laughed, ruffling Dave's hair. "I do wish you would have told me sooner though. At least a little sooner than this afternoon, right before your friend came over."

"I'm"

"Speaking of your friend." Dirk interrupted, stepping away from Dave to lean against the counter again. "What was that cuddling about?"

Dave turned tomato red. "We"

"Post-coital cuddles?" Dirk wagged his eyebrows suggestively. "Hm?"

"What the"no! \_No\_! Hell no." Dave shook his head, waving his hands, practically glowing now. "Absolutely not. We fell asleep during a movie. We didn't doing anything \_like that\_. Jesus"get your head out of the gutter, bro!"

Dirk barked out a laugh. "I don't know if I believe you now, you sound pretty guilty."

"Shut up!" Dave glared at his brother and then stomped off in the direction of his bedroom, trying his best to ignore his brothers obnoxious laughter.

When he walked into his room"accidentally slamming the door shut behind him"John was just sitting up, rubbing the sleep out of his

eyes. He yawned loudly, stretching his arms high above his head. He squinted at Dave, blinking a few times before a stupid grin spread across his face, making Dave feel both guilty and inexplicably happy.

"Hey, Dave." John mumbled. "W'time is it?"

"Almost seven." Dave said as he crossed over to sit at the foot of his bed. "Dirk brought pizza, so if you want to eat before you go, you can." He frowned, already disliking the idea of John having to leave. It was sort of pathetic. "Did your dad say anything about how late you could stay out?"

John shrugged. "He doesn't mind if I stay out late if it's not a school night. And it's Friday, so I can stay for a while longer if it's not too much trouble."

"No, it's okay!" Dave grinned. "I'm sure Dirk won't mind."

"Dirk also doesn't mind if your friend wants to stay the night." Dirk's voice said from the doorway. "As long as you get permission from your dad, of course."

"Really?" John glanced at Dave briefly before turning his attention to Dirk. "Sweet, okay. I'll go ahead and text my dad now. If he says yeah he'll probably bring clothes for me so he can meet everyone."

"That's fine." Dirk waved away the comment. "Let me know."

Dave sighed and fell forward onto John's lap when his brother was gone. "That was annoying."

"What do you mean?"

"He said you could stay because he's mocking me. He saw us sleeping together when he got home, and he's never going to let me live it down." Dave grumbled, rolling over so he was looking up at John. He had a goofy smile stuck on his face. "What?"

"Nothing." John shrugged, setting his phone down on the bed so he could play with Dave's hair. "I like this."

"Don't get all emotional on me, Egderp. It's totally unironic."

John snorted. "Whatever."

Dave smiled a little at his response and closed his eyes, relaxing into the feel of John's fingers combing through his hair. The last time anyone had played with his hair was when he was little, maybe six or seven years old, and he hadn't been able to sleep by himself. He would run out of his room in the middle of the night and into Dirk's room, curling up beside him. Dirk would talk about literally anything and just run his fingers through Dave's hair—though at the time he was still Danielle, and his hair had grown past his shoulders. Dave had outgrown that habit when he started middle school. That was about the time he'd started to realize he was different. Middle school was the worst time to figure something like that out, in his opinion.



\_ "Can I go to the restroom?" \_

\_ "You can wait until I finish with the lesson, Danielle." \_

\_ "It's an emergency!" \_

\_ The math teacher pursed her lips in annoyance. "I doubt it. You do this everyday." \_

\_ "But I'm \_serious \_this time." Danielle pleaded, her eyes wide. "I'm really, really serious. I gotta go." She ignored the snickers of her classmates around her. "I'm seriously about to piss all over myself." \_

\_ "Danielle!" \_

\_ "Let me fucking go then!" She snapped, smacking her hand down on the desk. "If you don't say I can, I'm going to go anyway." \_

\_ The teacher's face flushed red with anger. "Go then! You'll have an escort to the office when you get back." \_

\_ Danielle got up from her seat and bowed. "How kind of you." \_

\_ She bolted from the room then, streaking down the hall in the direction of the bathroom, ignoring the strange looks she got from all of the students and teachers she passed. She stumbled to a stop just outside of the bathroom, huffing, trying to catch her breath. She looked up, about to enter the bathroom when she realized what side she was on. She backed away from the boys' side, cheeks burning, and stumbled into the girls' bathroom. \_

\_ Danielle ran into the first stall open and yanked down her pants, just staring, her eyes wide with terror. The first thought that ran through her head was, \_"Oh my God, I'm dying."

\_ But then she realized that was stupid. She lived with a guy, and had lived with one her whole life. She hadn't exactly been taught about her body and what it would start to do in detail. Sure her brother had hinted here and there, but the conversations were awkward and Danielle was eager to shut him up as soon as he started. She didn't want to hear about all the ways her body would betray her. Because it really did feel like betrayal. This wasn't right. This was her. \_She \_wasn't \_her\_. She knew that much. But what even could she call that feeling? Of just being wrong inside? \_

\_ "Danielle?" \_

\_ "What?" She cringed at how shrill her voice sounded. \_

\_ "Are you okay?" \_

\_ She yanked a wad of toilet paper from the roll and started padding down her underwear. "Uh, yeah. I'm okay. No worries. I'll be done in a second." \_

\_ "You've been in here for like, twenty minutes. Ms. April started ranting about how you were skipping class and sent me in here to get you." The girl's voice moved closer until Danielle could see her shoes under the door. "Are you sure you're okay? You don't sound

okay."\_

\_ Danielle hesitated. "I'm scared."\_

\_ "What's wrong?"\_

\_ "Iâ€”I'm bleeding."\_

\_ There was a short pause. "You started your period. That shouldn't scare you. I started mine a couple weeks ago. It's normal."\_

\_ "I know." Danielle bit her lip. "Go get Ms. April."\_

\_ "Are you sure? She's pretty pissed right now."\_

\_ "Go!"\_

\_ "Alright, Jesus... calm down."\_

\_ When Danielle heard the slam of the bathroom door, she burst into tears.\_

"Dave?"

Dave blinked, trying to clear his blurry vision. "Wâ€”what?"

"You're crying."

"I'm fine. Don't worry about it." He sat up, wiping his eyes. "I'll be right back."

John watched Dave walk off towards the restroom with a troubled expression. He'd been acting odd ever since John had come over. It wasn't like John didn't know something was up, he wasn't that big of an idiot all the time. He could tell something was bothering Dave, and he'd all but gotten a confession of when it when they'd kissed. But Dave wasn't ready to tell him just yet. John wondered how serious of an issue this could be if it could make Dave cry without him realizing it.

"Hey John, your dad is here." Dirk said, poking his head into the room.

"Okay, I'm coming."

John slid off the bed and followed Dirk out into the living room where his father stood, holding his book bag. He smiled at his son and closed the remaining distance between them, handing John the bag.

"I packed everything you asked me to." His grin widened and he leaned forward, keeping his voice low. "And a surprise for your friend."

"Dad, \_no\_." John groaned, already knowing where this was going. "Dave doesn't even like cake."

It was a lie of course. John had no idea whether or not Dave liked cake, but he was going to say that anyways. Mr. Egbert straightened up with a frown.

"Well, more for you!" He said, completely undeterred. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Strider." John's father said, addressing Dirk now. "I've heard a lot about Dave."

"Probably as much as I've heard about John." Dirk said politely, taking Mr. Egbert's outstretched hand.

"I'm just gonna... go..." John took his bag from his dad and ran back in the direction of Dave's room, slamming the door shut behind him. He slumped against the door, feeling as though he'd just barely managed to dodge the biggest bullet in the existence of bullets. He heaved and sigh and tossed his bag to the ground, shuffling over to Dave's bed, falling face-first into the mattress.

"Nice ass." Dave said with a laugh as he walked into the room. "And I should know. Because of my bro, I'm surrounded by ass on a daily basis. I hate those stupid smuppets. Ever had one in the shower with you? Not cool at all. Completely ironic though, which basically makes it cool."

"You and your brother's obsession with irony makes no sense ever." John said as he rolled over, watching Dave as he strolled across the room to his closet, towel drying his hair. He was wearing a pair of loose fitting plaid pajama bottoms and a massive t-shirt that made him look twelve times smaller than he already was.

"What's with the shirt? Where did you even manage to find something that big?"

"Oh, this?" Dave asked, trying to keep the tremor out of his voice. "I had Rose make it for me for my birthday. I happened to mention I liked sleeping in shirts the size of Texas and she made it happen. Completely ironic. It was the perfect gift."

John pursed his lips and then laughed, shrugging. "That makes sense. Rose would do something like that for you. She always knits these really cool things for birthdays." He jumped up from the bed and picked up his bag, rummaging through the contents for his pajamas. "I'll be right back."

Dave plopped down onto his bed, crossing his legs. "I'll be right here."

John grinned and shook his head, closing the door behind him. Dave tried to keep his smile in place; he really did, but the anxiety that was creeping in was slowly but surely making it impossible to breathe. He realized he could have just told John no, he couldn't stay the night, in the most polite way he could. But honestly, Dave wanted him to stay. He wanted to curl up beside that loser and fall asleep watching one of his many lame movies. But he knew being so close to John without his binder on would make him feel self-conscious on a level that would ruin any moment he could even dream of having with John. There was no way.

Dave looked up when John walked back into the room. "You shower fastâ€" "

"I didn't take a shower." John said as moved towards his bag to put away his day clothes, glancing up at Dave. His smile faltered when he

saw Dave's expression. "What? Should I have showered? I didn't think I smelled bad. It's not like I play any sort of sport or anything."

Dave shook his head quickly, clearing his throat. "No, uh... you don't smell bad. You just... you're not wearing a shirt."

John looked down at his bare chest like he was surprised, but then he laughed. "Oh crap, I didn't even think. I always sleep without a shirt on at home, so I didn't bother putting one on when I was changing. Dad probably didn't even pack me an extra shirt because I didn't ask for one. Should I just put my old shirt back on? If it makes you uncomfortable or anythingâ€"

"No it doesn't make me uncomfortable." He lied easily, smiling sheepishly. "I just didn't expect you to..." he trailed off, trying to think of the right way to put it. "I don't know. Never mind."

A slow smirk spread across John's face. "I think it does make you uncomfortable. Just a little bit." He sat down in front of Dave, sitting cross-legged just like him. John held out his hands expectantly, and after a short moment of hesitation, Dave took his hands and twined their fingers together. "But not in a bad way. Right?"

Dave chewed on his bottom lip. "Right."

John laughed, squeezing his hands. "Good."

#### 4. Is Jason Statham Even Still Relevant?

**\*\*A/N: \*\***The end! I had a lot of fun writing this little three part one-shot. I really love me some trans!Dave. And I hope you did, too. There will probably be more trans!Dave in the future. I would say there might be trans!John but I just don't see him as transgender, not even as like an experimental headcanon sort of thing. Anyway, I'm think about doing a DaveKat one-shot series. What do you guys think? I literally ship everything. I'm a ship whore.

\* \* \*

><p>"Dave, just pick a movie. I'm going to fall asleep before it's over anyway. Just come here." John groaned, flinging his torso over the side of the bed. Dave grimaced and without looking at what he grabbed, put in a movie. He pushed himself off the ground and pulled at his shirt to keep it from settling over his chest as he walked over to his side of the bed. John sat up and laid back down, wriggling under the blankets until he was comfortable.<p>

Dave raised an eyebrow. "Done?"

"Yeah." John laughed, patting the empty space beside him. "Come on."

Dave crawled into bed beside John, turning his back to him and curling in on himself, still pulling at his shirt. He grabbed his pillow and pulled it close to his chest, relaxing a little. He let his eyes and took a deep breath, letting it out slowly.

John waited patiently for Dave to get settled before scooting closer and resting his arm over Dave's waist. "Is this okay?" He whispered, moving his other arm under Dave's head. John could feel how tense Dave was and was considering backing off when he spoke.

"Yeah, it's okay." It was both a lie and the truth. He really liked being this close to John. The feel of John's body wrapped around his own somehow made him feel safer, but at the same time it set him on edge. At any moment it felt like John could somehow figure out that Dave was actually a girl. Dave had no idea how John would react to news like that. Hell, he hadn't even known the kid was gay.

\_Well fuck... is he even gay?\_ Dave bit his lip in worry. Maybe there was some sort of weird chemical in Dave that made John attracted to him because he was biologically female. But if John wasn't gay, then how was he so easy-going about the whole thing? He really was an idiot. But so was Dave. Well, he felt like he was an idiot. None of this made sense, and that's what scared him.

"G'night, Dave." John yawned, shmooshing his cheek against the back of Dave's head as he pulled him closer.

Dave held his pillow tighter. "Goodnight, John."

He laid there for a while, listening to the movie in the background and to John's even breathing. A few times Dave's eyelids drooped, but every time he jolted awake again, still terrified of falling asleep. Around the time he heard the movie credits start rolling, John's breathing changed and became slower and deeper as he took on a light snore. Dave sighed as his death grip on his pillow loosed into a non-lethal choke hold. He rolled slowly onto his stomach, placing his pillow over John's arm. John grumbled unintelligibly, his arm tightening around Dave's waist briefly before going slack again. Dave smiled a little and closed his eyes.

" 'Night, Egderp."

John snored in response. Dave chuckled quietly to himself before finally drifting off to sleep.

\* \* \*

><p>Dave woke up with a start, leaping upright into a sitting position, gasping and clutching his blanket over his chest. He blinked a few times and looked around his room, squinting through the dark. He took a deep breath and let his hands fall into his lap, shaking his head. <em>It was just a dream. Get a hold of yourself, dude. <em>Dave looked over to the right when he felt movement, startled at first, but when he saw John he smiled and tried to get his stupid heart to stop racing. Damn thing had no idea what was going on.

John groaned loudly as he sat up and stretched, flinging his arms forward and arching his back, then out to his sides, accidentally brushing against Dave's chest. He froze mid-yawn and dropped his arms turning to look at Dave. "Am I dreaming... or do you have boobs? 'Cause I totally felt boobs."

"Nâ€"no you didn't it's jâ€"just my shirt. It bunches up weird sometimes andâ€" "

"I'm pretty sure I felt boobs." John snapped, throwing the blankets back. "Not your shirt."

"Johnâ€" "

"Don't lie to me! You're totally hiding something. You even told me yourself that you had some sort of issue. Is that why you tense up and get weird when I try and touch you?" John reached over to take Dave's hand, but Dave flinched, moving his hand out of John's reach. "I mean, it's not normal at all but you don't have to be so weird about it."

"I'm a girl!" Dave snapped angrily, glaring at his hands. "I wanted to tell you when we kissed. Hell, I wanted to tell you before we kissed. You're my best friend. I knew I shouldn't keep something like that from you. But I panicked."

"You're... a girl?" John grimaced, trying to wrap his head around that. "You lied to me."

"No, I didn't lie!" Dave looked over at John in horror. "I'm not lying to you. I'm trying to tell you the truth! I do like you, John. I really doâ€" "

"You can't just not tell someone something like this, Dave!" John shouted, getting out of bed. "I was totally thinking I was gay. Do you know how terrifying that is for someone who originally thought they were straight? And here I am, totally attracted to you, and wondering why the hell I'm suddenly gay for my best friend. That doesn't even make any sense! So yeah, I think you were lying to me."

"John, pleaseâ€" "

"No, stop trying to make excuses." John glared at Dave and shook his head, walking over to snatch his bag off the ground. "I'm going to call my dad to come and get me. I need some time to think about this."

"John, waitâ€" "

"No!" John whirled around, really angry this time. "You're a liar, Dave! And I bet that's not even your real name. Legally, at least. What is it? 'Cause I mean, I've been calling you Dave for what... five years now? That's a long time. I'm curious why you didn't tell me sooner. Do you even trust me?"

"Of course, butâ€" "

"But what? I don't understand? I might have, if you would have told me before all of this. When I was still your best friend. Before I started to think I wanted to be more than just friends. Before I thought I'd have to come out as gay."

"This is hard for me!" Dave shouted. "Even before I knew you, I had this feeling of being wrong. Like I wasn't even myself. I was terrified everyday of my life. Just waking up and realizing I had to go to school as a girl was enough to send me into a panic attack! When I moved here, I realized I had a chance to start over. To be

someone I was comfortable being. And I didn't have to tell anyone. And then you just made it complicated. We were just friends, and everything was going great, but then I realized I fucking loved you and we kissed andâ€œ"

"Did you just say you loved me?"

Dave froze. "Uh... yeah." He blinked, swallowing hard. "Iâ€œI did."

John shook his head. "Lucky me, I guess."

Dave watched him leave, slack-jawed and wide-eyed. His heart felt like it had shattered into a million pieces. One of the two people he had been so scared in confessing to had rejected him. \_Lucky me, I guess\_. Those words swirled around the place where his heart used to be, stomping on all of the broken pieces, somehow making it hurt worse. John didn't want him. John thought he was a liar. John hated him. Dave closed his eyes against the tears, but the traitorous droplets fell anyway.

\* \* \*

><p>At first he thought he was laying in a puddle of drool, and the following thought was <em>oh my God, that's so gross<em>, and the following thought after that was, \_I hope I'm not drooling on John. \_And that was the thought that made him open his eyes and realize he wasn't drooling.

He was crying.

Dave sat up slowly, stiff from the twisted position he'd been sleeping in, and reached up to wipe his eyes. Yeah, he was definitely crying. He closed his eyes, trying to remember his dream. He could remember the look on John's face when he'd told him. He remembered telling John he loved him. He remembered being called a liar. \_Lucky me, I guess. \_Those words felt like a thousand needles being simultaneously shoved into his heart and lungs. It hurt to breathe.

Was he lying? Dave didn't feel like he was lying. Purposefully keeping this kind of thing from John wasn't exactly his choice. Well, it was, but not a choice he made because he didn't want to tell him. Dave \_couldn't\_ tell John. Just thinking about telling him was enough to send him into a panic attack. His throat felt like sandpaper. Dave threw the blanket off of him and stumbled out of bed, all but running towards the kitchen.

He turned on the tap and just stuck his head under the current, turning his face up so the water could run into his mouth and over his face. He pulled back gasping, wiping the water away and squeezing it out of his hair as best as he could without a towel. Dave grimaced, leaning against the counter. \_Get a grip, Strider. Real John isn't like Dream John. \_

"Lucky me, I guess." Dave whispered, pressing the heels of hands to his eyes like he could actually stop the tears that way. He needed fresh air. Dave shook his head and grabbed his house key, not bothering to put on shoes as he ran outside, ignoring the elevator and taking the stairs two at a time. He pushed open the door that led

onto the roof and took a moment to take a deep breath, shivering against the chill. Dave walked over to the edge of the building and sat down, letting his feet dangle.

The logical side of him told him that he was being stupid. John would never say the kind of hurtful things he said in Dave's dream. Even if he didn't accept Dave, that level of cruelty just wasn't possible for John. Dave knew that. But the irrational side of him told him that it didn't matter if John couldn't be outwardly cruel. He could still think mean things. He could still think Dave was some sort of freak of nature.

Dave could handle just about anything, but he knew that if John rejected him, any confidence he had in himself would break. He didn't know why this was so important to him. In his dream, he'd said he loved John, but he didn't actually know if he did or not. Sure, he thought John was nice—"sometimes too nice"—and he was funny. John could always make Dave smile no matter what. And even though he could be the biggest idiot on the planet, John was also smart. He lacked a healthy dose of common sense, but he really was one of the smartest people Dave knew. John was also good looking. He was taller than Dave by at least a foot, and Dave stood no taller than five feet. John had dark skin like he was always out in the sun, and wavy black hair. And somehow his dorky glasses and slightly-longer-than-they-should-be-teeth made him even more adorable. But all of that wasn't enough for love, was it?

Dave figured love was much harder than that. He couldn't describe it because he didn't know what it was supposed to feel like. But he was sure that being afraid of losing that person you might be in love with was part of the whole love thing. Because he was terrified of losing John, almost as much as he was terrified of losing Dirk. And Dirk was his brother! He was his own flesh and blood. That had to count for something.

"I love John." Dave whispered to the sky, leaning back on his hands. The city made it hard to see the stars, but the moon seemed to make up for it tonight. It was shining a lot brighter than it usually did. "I finally find someone and it's this idiot. And I can't even tell him the fucking truth. I'm pathetic."

He leaned forward, resting his elbows on his knees, and buried his face in his hands. He sat like that for a while. Long enough for his back and neck to feel stiff. Also long enough for John to conveniently wake up and find him sitting on the roof. What was this, some sort of romance novel? This sort of thing only happened in the books.

Dave looked over at John, who was sitting beside him now, his dark hair sticking out in literally every direction. He smiled sleepily. "It feels nice outside. I was getting hot without my ice cube beside me."

Dave rolled his eyes. "I have a fan. And you could have just opened a window."

"You're ruining the moment." John teased, sticking out his tongue. A moment of silence passed between them. "So... why are you outside so late? I also want to know why you're all wet."



"I couldn't sleep." Dave lied, looking down at his shirt. "And I was a little thirsty, so I basically stuck my head in the sink. Sue me."

"Dave." John sighed, shaking his head. "I know you're lying. About the sleep thing anyway. I woke up at some point to use the bathroom and you were totally out. After I left and came back, I even had to move you a little bit because you'd shifted in your sleep and taken up my side of the bed. You didn't even notice. You were \_out\_."

"Johnâ€" "

"I won't make you talk about it." John smiled and then turned his face up to look at the sky. "Sometimes we just have things we can't talk about right now. I get it. I was there once. So whatever it is, don't feel pressured to talk to me about it. We'll get there eventually. And I promise that whatever it is, I won't judge you. I won't get mad or upset. Or anything really. I'll help you if I can. And if I can't, well then I'll just be there for you. 'Cause you're my best friend." John looked at Dave again. He was still smiling, but it seemed different now. Softer somehow. It made Dave's heart do little back-flips. "And my boyfriend."

Dave's heart went from somersaulting to outright soaring at hearing that label. \_I love him. I fucking love him. \_He watched John push himself away from the edge of the roof and stand, debating on whether or not he should follow him back to bed or if he should just blurt everything out. It would make things so much simpler if he just told John here and now. He wouldn't have to suffer through the anxiety anymore. It would be do or die in this moment.

John leaned down and kissed Dave's cheek. "I'm going to go back to bed. Feel free to join me when you're ready, okay?"

"Okay." Dave watched John turn, his heart still racing. \_Now or never, Strider. Pretend that if you don't tell him now, you'll never get to. \_"John?"

He turned around. "Yeah?"

"I wanna tell you." Dave said, trying to keep his voice from shaking. "Like now."

John's complacent expression didn't change as he turned to sit beside Dave again. "Alright. I'm all ears." He mimed zipping his lips and throwing out the key. This made Dave laugh despite his anxiety. He reached out for John's hand, twining their fingers together. He rubbed circles into the back of John's hand and tried not to think. He only took deep, calming breaths. It would be okay. John promised to understand. This was real, it wasn't a dream, and John wasn't the John from his dreams.

"Okay, then." Dave said on his exhale, sitting a little straighter. "I'm going to tell you."

John remained silent, waiting patiently.

"I'm going to." Dave continued, looking out at the cityscape. "I'm not going to panic."

"Dave." John murmured, squeezing his hand reassuringly.

Dave nodded. "Okay, okay. I'm good. I'm fine." He closed his eyes. He could tell John like this. If he just focused on how dark it was behind his eyelids instead of how fast his heart was beating and how painful that was. "I'm actually a girl. Or I was. I was born a girl. I started calling myself Dave about five years ago, maybe a few months before I met you, actually. But I always knew. I just felt so... wrong inside. And becoming Dave made me feel like a real person. Like I wasn't just putting on an act anymore. I was pretending to be her. She was just like a mask or something. I know I'm rambling, but I had a nightmare about this. About telling you. And I think I'm still talking so you don't get a chance to." Dave paused, keeping his eyes shut. There was only silence. Well, as silent as it could be in the city. "I don't want you to hate me because of this. I wanted to tell you. At first I told myself I wouldn't tell you because I wasn't ready. And the years passed. And now we're here and I didn't have that excuse anymore. I was ready to tell you, I just wasn't ready for what your reaction could be." \_Because I love you. \_He didn't say that though. It would be too much.

"Dave, I'd still love you even if you were a troll."

His eyes flew open at John's words. "What?"

"Seriously. That sort of thing doesn't matter to me. I like you because of you. If I'd met you when you were a girl, I think I still would have fallen for you. I'm attracted to who you are as a person, not to what might be between your legs. I literally couldn't care less." John shook his head. "I like you, Dave. Probably against my better judgment, but I do. I think you're hilarious and way too nice even though it doesn't seem like it all the time. But you do care about everyone, almost to a fault. You'd die for any one of us, I'm sure of it. You're so talented. I can't even wrap my head around it sometimes. And I have to admit, you're easy on the eyes, too." He grinned, bumping his shoulder against Dave's. Then he was serious again. "You're distinctly you. And there really isn't a better way I can put that. And I love you for that one simple fact."

\_There's that word again. He said it twice. \_Dave was making a valiant effort to not cry, but it was in vain. He leaned over to rest his head on John's shoulder, wiping his eyes and nose with his free hand and hiccuping quietly.

"Thank you." He whispered, letting go of John's hand to hold him instead. "I wasn't expecting you to say any of that."

"What were you expecting?" John asked quietly, reaching around Dave, rubbing circles into his back. "I'll admit I don't understand what makes you feel the way you do, but I could never hate you for it. And yeah, I wish you would have told me sooner, but I can't fault you for that either. Fear does strange things to a person, so I understand why you couldn't tell me. I met you as Dave, so you'll always be Dave to me."

Dave sat up, wiping his eyes. "I feel like twenty pounds lighter."

"Why?"

"Relieving myself of a mental burden I've shouldered for as long as I can remember. And also I've done a lot of crying today. That's uncool. I've gotta do something to fix the balance of cool and pathetic in my life, and quick."

John laughed. "You're ridiculous."

Dave grinned and pushed himself away from the edge of the roof, grabbing John's arm. "C'mere."

John turned to face Dave and scooted closer, crossing his legs. Dave shifted and moved to sit on John's lap, resting his arms on his shoulders. John stared at him, shocked by how bold Dave was being. He knew that if he looked down, he would be able to clearly see the outline of Dave's chest, so of course he didn't look. If he was being honest with himself, he'd noticed it earlier, but he hadn't said anything. If he hadn't noticed it then, then he would have figured it out when Dave had gotten into bed and had basically made a show of protecting his torso. John wasn't a complete idiot. If Dave had given him a few more days, he would have figured it out for himself. Thinking back, John now wondered if anyone else knew about Dave. But right now that didn't matter. What mattered was at that moment, he had Dave, his boyfriend, sitting on his lap—and he looks very kissable, his mind added for him.

Dave combed his fingers through John's hair and smiled. "Thank you," he repeated "for everything you said. I really was scared. It was stupid, I know, but I couldn't help it. That's why they're called irrational fears, right?"

"Right." John grinned, moving his hands lightly from Dave's waist and down his thighs, then gently tracing back up to his waist and just under his shirt. John's fingers traced random patterns on Dave's lower back, moving around to his hips and then back down to repeat the process.

"Stop it." Dave laughed, wriggling. "That tickles!"

"Does it?" John raised an eyebrow. "I don't really think I want to stop. You're adorable when you laugh, and you haven't laughed nearly as much as you should have today. I'm just helping you out."

"Stop it!" Dave whined, laughing harder now that John's light touches had actually turned into real tickling. "Stop, it hurts!" He gasped, pushing against John's shoulders. "I can't breathe! Haha, oh my God, John—ow, ow." Dave doubled over, clutching his sides with his forehead against John's chest, breathing heavily. "Dick."

John chuckled, wrapping his arms tightly around Dave. "I can live with that."

## 5. 7 Minutes in Heaven!

"Dave!"

"Oh no..."

"Dave, come here!"

You weren't sure how they had found you, because you really had tried your best to stay far away from the group—consisting of John, Rose, and Jade all sitting together, with Gamzee, Sollux, as well as what looked like two open spaces where other people had been sitting and two very disgruntled lurkers you recognized as Nepeta Leijon and Eridan Ampora—in the living room sitting in a lopsided circle around an empty Smirnoff bottle, spinning it and sending the victims off to another room. You had tried to stay far, \_far\_ away because you knew they would drag you into the game, and you didn't want to play. Everyone in the circle was either someone you hated or a good friend, and it would be your luck to get picked.

But you couldn't ignore the voice calling out to you. You'd never been able to.

" 'Sup, Egderp?"

You plop down beside your sister, Rose, who barely gives you a second glance. She seems pretty drunk already—which is only vaguely irritating—and she's making eyes at another girl across the circle, who doesn't appear to be drunk at all. Though she does keep nervously glancing at Rose. She looks more confused than anything and probably frustrated that she can't just lean over and ask Rose why the hell she's staring at her. But that was just your guess. That would be what you would think, anyway.

"We're playing 7 Minutes in Heaven! Have you played before?"

You shrug. "No, can't say that I have. And I really don't want to."

"Oh come on!" John pleaded. "It's really fun. I haven't been picked yet, but it's been hilarious so far. The last ones to get picked were Karkat and Terezi. He seemed pretty happy about it, but we all had to practically drag Terezi into the closet with him. He's probably dead, but we won't know for another like, three minutes."

"So what do you do exactly?"

"It's like a kissing game, sort of." Jade interjected before John could open his mouth. "The next person in line spins the bottle. Terezi was sitting in the space next to where you're sitting, so you would be next if you chose to play, actually. Anyway, you'd spin this bottle. Whoever it lands on is the one you have to go into the closet with for exactly seven minutes. Whatever you do in there is a complete secret to us. We have no idea. It's so much fun!"

You lean back on your hands. "So you don't actually have to do anything with that person? Okay, cool, I'm in." Dave glanced at Gamzee, who was currently passed out, snoring loudly under a mountain of soda bottles. Unless the bottle stopped on him. Then he was out. He was \_so\_ out\_. There was no way he would get stuck in a closet with that train wreck for seven seconds, let alone seven minutes. Someone probably would die.

"I'm guessing you want to get picked by her." You look over at your sister, nodding in the direction of the girl she was looking at. It was so hard to remember her name. Mostly because you hadn't met her

before, but that was irrelevant. "I didn't know you were gay."

"Likewise." Rose slurred, turning her attention to you. "You're pretty gay, yourself."

"Uh, excuse me." You sit up, crossing your arms over your chest. "I'm not gay."

Rose snorts. "Please. If you're not gay, then I'm not a girl."

You glare at each other. "I've never even been with a guy."

"First sign your gay."

"No way!" You snap. When you see a few heads turn in your direction, you lower your voice. "Come on, Rose. Be serious."

"I am being serious." She said smoothly, no longer slurring. Was she actually drunk or was she pretending to be drunk? She was so difficult to figure out sometimes. "I've never seen you with a girl. I suppose that doesn't mean you're gay, but you don't even look at them. Ever. It's not a bad thing that you're gay. I'm just making an observation, Dave. And I'm usually right."

"Well you're wrong this time." She snorts. "Don't knock it until you try it."

Karkat and Terezi choose that moment to return. Terezi walks calmly over to her spot beside you, grinning from ear-to-ear. She turns her head in your direction and inhales. Her grin broadens.

"Hey, cool kid!" She bumps your shoulder with hers. "I didn't expect to not see you here!" She laughs at her own joke. You can't help but chuckle along with her, bumping her shoulder in return.

"I'm here for ironic purposes. Because you didn't expect it. It's sort of what I do." You shrug and look up at Karkat, who'd been walking much slower than Terezi. "Whoa, dude, your face looks like it was just mauled by a rabid gerbil. What's that about?"

"Something like that." Karkat mutters in response, ignoring your question. As he's walking in front of Terezi, she sticks her cane out in his path, successfully tripping him. He flails and goes tumbling into Gamzee, who sits up with a shout. He instantly calms down when he sees Karkat laying across his lap, a stupid grin spreading across his painted face. You roll your eyes.

"What's up, Karbro?"

"Get off, clown face!" Karkat shrieks as he scrambles to get off of Gamzee.

Gamzee just laughs. "Hey, you all up and landed on me, bro."

"Anyway..." Jade laughs uncomfortably. "It's your turn, Dave. Go ahead and spin the bottle."

You shrug and reach forward to spin it. Everyone watches it in

silence. You have no idea who you want it to land on. Honestly, you don't really care. You just hope it isn't Gamzee. Or Rose—"oh God that would be weird"—or even John. That would be weird, too, but for different reasons. And you weren't entirely sure if you even knew those reasons, you just knew that those were the people you didn't want to go into that damned closet with. In a way, you wouldn't mind if you had to go in with Terezi. The two of you had sort of dated once, though you really were using the word dating loosely. Jade ran a close second.

The bottle made a few more circles before slowly coming to a stop. You stare at the bottle for a few seconds, knowing who it's pointing to. You know and you don't want to look up. Because if you do, you're going to fly off the handle. There was absolute silence in the group, though the party surrounding you was utter chaos. Slowly you look up, and John is staring at you with wide eyes. You're sure that your expression is a mirror image of his. How does he feel about getting chosen? Jade herself had said that you didn't have to do anything, and no one would ever have to know. But... you could also do whatever you wanted and still... no one had to know. The only question was did you want to do anything?

Why had John been one of the people you had absolutely not wanted to go into the closet with?

"Okay, you guys can stop ogling at each other. Go, or we'll drag you into the closet." Jade commanded. Dave stood up and John followed suit, both of them moving towards the aforementioned closet in silence. Dave walked in first, John following and closing the door behind them. It was dark and actually really cramped. It had a musty smell, like it was rarely used. You reached around with your hand, hoping for some sort of light switch, but frowned when you came up empty.

"Well..." You sighed, leaning back against the wall on your side of the closet, staring through the darkness where John stood awkwardly in front of you. Your legs were all twisted, and you could feel his hands against your thigh. He was fidgeting a lot. It was making you nervous, and that was really uncool. "If this is what Heaven is like, I think I'd rather just become a vampire and live forever or something."

"Sorry. You were probably hoping literally anyone else had gotten picked." John muttered. Still fidgeting. Damn it! You nudge his ankle with your foot.

"Dude, stop with the hands. You're making me nervous."

"Sorry, I can't help it."

"Why?"

There was a really long pause. You could have sworn at least two minutes had passed. "Because I wanted to get picked."

"—you what?" You sputtered, completely shocked. "You wanted... to get picked... by me? Why?"

John tried to shift around, but the way your legs were twisted around his, it just wasn't happening. He gave up with an exasperated huff.

"I don't know... I just wanted you to pick me. I was glad I found you earlier because I didn't want anyone else to pick me. I was hoping it would be you. I was even planning on leaving the game if I'd gotten picked by anyone else."

"Johnâ€" "

"That makes me gay though, and you're not gay. So this is just going to be an awkward seven minutes for the both of us. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have asked you to play. I didn't know what I was thinking." He laughed, but it wasn't John's normal happy laugh. "No, I knew what I was thinking. I was hoping I could tell you all this and you'd tell me you felt the same. I'm such an idiot. You pegged me, Dave, you got it. Egderp. That's me."

This was probably the most ironic situation you'd ever been in. And it was entirely uncool. And you also didn't really care. Blindly, you sought out John's fidgeting hands. You felt his body tense in shock, having not expected you to do what you were doing.

"Dave?"

"What?"

"You're not gonnaâ€" "

"Of course not."

You tug on his hands. John swears as he stumbles, knocking something over, falling against your chest. He stutters out an apology, trying to back off, but you let go of his hands and grab his waist instead, holding him where he stood. "I have no idea where your face is." You say quietly, squinting through the darkness. Seriously though, like how dark can a fucking closet be? This was impossible.

You feel John's clammy hands press against your cheeks, tilting your face up. God, was he really that much taller than you. Damn it. "Your hands feel gross, dude."

"Shut up."

Your first reaction is to pull away, wipe your mouth, and shriek about how gay you \_aren't \_when you feel his lips on yours. Because kissing John was entirely unexpected and not entirely unpleasant. But the lack of unpleasantness went along with your second reaction, which was to attempt to pull him closerâ€"which, of course, you did. You didn't want to be a clichÃ©, but you could feel your heart pounding away inside your chest. There had been no way of knowing you would like kissing John this much. He was your best friend, so you'd never really given kissing him any thought. Of course you hadn't. You were both guys. And he was your best friend.

But it wasn't like you hadn't noticed him. And not like noticed him like, \_"Oh hey, John, best friend, buddy, ol' pal, how ya doin'?" \_Nothing like that. More like how his eyes changed color with the mood he was in, and that you knew he was happy when they were light blue. Or how he bit his lip whenever he was thinking about a question seriously. Or when he fidgeted his fingers when he was nervous. Or how his smile seemed to get even bigger when you walked in the room.

Yeah, you'd noticed that. Why you'd never given it much thought though, that surprised you.

Yeah, you'd had a weird fling with Terezi, and some sort of odd crush-but-not-really on Jade. But John was different. It was like he was on another level you hadn't quite reached yet but had been slowly working towards. You realized that if whatever had began in this closet continued, it would actually mean something, because John meant a lot to you. You couldn't pretend this hadn't happened. You wouldn't be able to forget this. And you didn't want to, either. Honestly, you wanted to push it as far it could go. Seven minutes in Heaven, right?

"John, how long as it been?" You pull back, feeling short of breath and vaguely lightheaded. So weird. "Seven minutes, right?"

"I don't know. I think so." He didn't move. You sighed and tried to untangle yourself from him to open the door but only stumbled and shoved your shoulder up against the wall. You grimaced in pain and mumbled unintelligibly under your breath. John laughed and twisted out of your way so you could reach the handle. You try turning it, but it doesn't budge.

"Uh, John? Can this thing be locked?"

"It shouldn't be." He tried the handle, too, but it still didn't turn. He groaned. "Damn it."

"What?"

"I knew this would happen." He mumbled, falling back against the opposite wall. "I didn't know it would happen this time, but I knew it was going to happen."

"What the hell are you talking about, Egderp?"

"Everyone had been talking about pulling a prank on one of the couples who had to go into the closet. It was going to be done randomly. We would all know there would be a prank, we would just have no idea who it would be pulled on. They must have taken a vote when we went in and locked the door somehow." John laughed. "They'll unlock it when the party's over or if they're feeling merciful. It's not a big deal."

You sigh, leaning heavily against the wall. After a few seconds, you get tired of standing and slide to the floor. Your knees are almost up to your chin in this small space. "This sucks."

John laughs again. "You don't want to be stuck in a closet with me all night? That hurts. And here I thought you were enjoying our time together."

"Shut up!"

"Oh come on, Strider, I'm only messing with you." John's legs smoosh up against yours as he slides to the floor, still in front of you. "But seriously... you did like it, right? You weren't just trying to make me feel better, right? Because that would make me feel worse. I didn't want you to feel like you had to kiss me. I was being stupid."



"You're always stupid." You mutter. "But I happen to like it. Sort of."

"Dave."

"What?"

John somehow manages to find your hands in the darkness. He tugs on your hands, making you swear as you awkwardly shift out of your knees-for-a-chin position and then swear some moreâ€"even louder, you feel like addingâ€"when he pulls you forward onto his lap. You push against his chest, your first goal being to get as far away as you can in this damned closet, but he wraps his arms around your waist. Stupid kid has a grip, you'll give him that.

When you give up on trying to break free, he loosens his hold on you, but never actually lets go. A silence passes between the two of you, and you'd sooner call it resigned rather than awkward. You'd stopped feeling nervous a while ago now. Resigned was probably the best word you could come up with at this particular moment.

"How long is this party?" You ask him eventually, trying to listen for any breaks in the shouting, laughing, off-key singing, or the horrible music blasting from the even worse speakers. You really wish you could have found your way to the DJ to make some much needed improvements to this party.

You feel John shrug, mostly because you'd moved your hands from your lap to his shoulders because you didn't like how close your hands were to his crotch in your current situation. Not that either of you seemed to mind the actual situation, but still. You had standards, and you weren't about to accidentallyâ€"or on purposeâ€"fondle Egbert in a closet. It just wasn't happening. Unless he asked.

\_Very nicely\_.

"I really don't know."

"Ugh." You drop your head, resting it on John's shoulder. "I'm not complaining, I'm just complaining. It's really hot in this stupid closet, but it was cold outside so I wore a jacket. Not to mention I'm fucking starving. I haven't eaten anything all day. Why? Don't ask Egderp, because you don't want to know."

"Uh... okay?" John said, though it really sounded more like a question. "You know, you can take off your jacket."

"You just want me to strip."

"I wouldn't complain if you did, but if you're hot, you should probably take off your jacket, Dave. I can't do anything about the heat, and it's not like we have water in here or anything if you have a heat stroke or something."

"I'm not going to have a heat stroke, Egderp."

He shrugged. "I'm just saying, worst case scenario."

"You're such an idiot." You mutter, unzipping your jacket. "Help me

out."

"Smooth, Strider." John laughs, pushing your jacket off your shoulders. "I'm pretty sure you could do this yourself. You just want me to undress you."

"No!" You snap, feeling your face burn. Suddenly you're grateful for the darkness. "I would probably accidentally smack you in the face with my arm trying to get it off by myself. I was just looking out for you, you fucking tard."

"You keep telling yourself that." John tosses your jacket to side, sliding his arms around your waist again. "So what are we gonna do with our remaining time in Heaven? I'm sure we've got hours at this point." John paused. "Do you... want to kiss again? Or was that just experimental for you?"

"I'm not gay." You couldn't help but point out. You felt like you needed to, like maybe it was being challenged again. So, you felt pretty sure you weren't gay, except you really liked kissing John. And he was a guy. So that made you gay. Or gay for John, at least, and you weren't sure if that was weird or not. "But I do want to kiss you again."

This time you made the first move, sliding your hands up from his shoulders to his neck, pulling him down to meet you halfway. Honestly you still couldn't get over how much taller he was. Had he always been so tall, or were you just realizing it now because it actually mattered? He unwound his arms from your waist and slid his hands underneath your shirt, pressing them against the small of your back, pushing down as he gently shifted his hips up. You gasp quietly against his lips and lean back for a second, only to return to the kiss with a new vigor, sliding your fingers up from his neck and into his hair, pulling at it hard enough to elicit a sharp groan from him. You could not stress enough how much you hadn't expected to like this.

You could feel his hands all over you, and you loved it. You loved this feeling. It was difficult to describe. It was exhilarating. And not just because you were making out and getting hot and heavy with a guy. It was because you were making out and getting hot and heavy with John. \_John fucking Egbert\_. And he really wasn't giving you any good reason to stop. You could feel his hand palming you through the fabric of your jeans and you bit the inside of your cheek, wrapping your arms around his shoulders. He wasn't giving you a reason to stop, no, but you knew it needed to stop. Not because you didn't want wherever he was taking this, because let's face it, you so did. You just weren't ready for it. And there was no way in hell you were losing your virginity in a fucking closet. \_Hell no\_.

"Johnâ€"ngh." You sit up and push against his chest, closing your eyes and trying to take deep, calming breaths. "Sâ€"stop. We need to chill out." You move away from him, returning to your spot on the floor so you could try to think clearly. Sitting on his lap was \_not helping\_ your train of thought. "I'm sorry. I justâ€" "

"No, it's okay." You didn't know how you could tell, but you knew he was smiling. And not in a mocking sort of way, but in a ridiculously happy sort of way. "I would have stopped eventually, too. I don't want to do that sort of thing in a closet."

"Oh, cool. Then we're on the same page." You nod, still trying to get a handle on your pounding heart. Damn this thing. "I think."

"You know... we won't be able to just forget this happened. Or I won't be able to, at least. I like you, Dave. And not just as a friend, but you're still my best friend! But like... as more than a friend. I don't know when that started. I just started realizing I didn't like seeing you with other people. Like the way Terezi was looking at you earlier irritated me."

"She's blind, John. She wasn't looking at anything."

"I know that! But she was still looking at you weird, and I know you guys sort of had a thing, and I did feel a little jealous. And then I know how you feel about Jadeâ€"

"Wait, how do youâ€"

"You told me once." John said quietly. "A couple years ago, you tried to explain your weird not-crush on Jade. I knew what it meant, that you might try and ask her out, and at first I didn't really care. I didn't want you like that. I was happy for you. I don't know what changed. I started thinking about why you'd chosen Jade. Like, I know you guys are really close. So I shouldn't have been surprised. But then I started thinking why'd you choose her and not me. I freaked out for a while." He went silent for a minute or two. "Do you remember when I barely talked to for like a week in the eighth grade?"

You nod, but when you realize he probably can't see you, you say, "Yeah, I remember."

"Well, that's when I sort of realized I had a crush on you. I still wonder where it came from, that sudden jealousy over you choosing Jade and not me. But anyway, after this, if you don't want toâ€"you knowâ€"try to keep it going then... I don't know. It'll be awkward for me. I'll get over it eventually. But I don't want to make you suffer because I developed a stupid crush on my straight best friend."

"I'm not gay." You repeated for like the millionth time. God, you sounded like a broken record. "But... I'm probably gay for you. Just saying."

"Wait, seriously?"

"What can I say?" You shrugged, trying not to smile despite yourself. "You're pretty persuasive. Or your mouth is, anyway. You're a pretty good kisser, Egderp. I'll give credit where credit is due." Now it was your turn to make an awkward pause. "But you're not the only one who developed a crush. I mean, I wouldn't use that word explicitly, because it was more like I noticed things about you that best friend probably wouldn't, especially two apparently straight male best friends, you know? And like I didn't really think about it too much until around that time I was sort of with Terezi. I think she could tell I wasn't really into what we were trying to create."

John laughed. "Thanks I guess?" He hesitated, and you could feel him start fidgeting again. You repressed a sigh. "Does that mean... I

guess, maybe, we could try... dating? I don't know, it's stupid. I'm stupid. This is stupid. And you're notâ€œ"

Giving yourself a mental fist bump for being able to find your way through the darkness and not break either of your faces, you grab John by his cheeks and kiss him pretty hard. He makes a weirdâ€œbut also hilariousâ€œsnorting slash grunting noise in surprise, but he melts in record time, pulling you right back down onto his lap. You feel the urge to roll your eyes but you repress that, too, in favor of kissing him.

"You're not stupid." You say breathlessly when you lean back, keeping the palms of your hands pressed firmly against his cheeks. You can't see him, but you're hoping you're making eye contact. "I want to try dating. I've never actually been in a serious relationship. I've made out with plenty of girls at parties. I had that sort of relationship with Terezi, and that didn't go anywhere, and I had a crush on Jade. So I don't actually know what the hell I'm doing. But I really do want to try." You lean in for another kiss. "Iâ€œ"

You look up, squinting against the sudden light filling the cramped closet. When you recognize Jade's silhouette, you try to scramble away from John, but he latches onto your waist like it's a lifeline. Knowing his damned superhuman grip, you give up trying fight him immediately, resigned to your impending humiliation.

Jade giggles and starts to walk away, leaving the door open. "Guess I owe Rose twenty dollars."

\* \* \*

><p><strong>AN: \*\*Ah, so here it is. Another John/Dave one-shot. I'm proud of this one. I made it to to appx. four thousand words before editing! I'm getting better at this. I've never actually played this game, so I wanted to be cliché and write a fic about 7 Minutes in Heaven. I know there are a couple of different ways to play, but I dig the old fashioned way of doing thingsâ€œspinning the bottle! Also, probably gonna start a GamKar or DaveKat one-shot series soon. \*shrugs\* we'll see!

End  
file.